

Name of person Interviewed: Sarah Broadwell [SB]

Facts about this person:

Age (if known)

Sex Female

Occupation

If a fisherman (if retired, list the ports used when fishing),

Home port, Montauk, Long Island

and Hail Port (port fished from, which can be the same) Montauk,  
Long Island

Residence (Town where lives) Montauk, Long Island

Ethnic background (if known) European American

Interviewer: Janice Gadaire Fleuriel [JGF]

Transcriber: Janice Gadaire Fleuriel

Place interview took place: New Bedford Harbormaster House

Date and time of interview: Sept. 23, 2007

## INDEX / KEYWORDS

KEYWORDS: Women; Fishing; Montauk; Long Island; Marine biology; Party boats; Charter boats; Dragging; Scalloping; Lobstering; Squid; Fluke; Whiting; New Jersey; Hudson's Canyon;

[Start of File WAV\_0036\_001]

[00:00] Born Denville, New Jersey; Grandparents in Sag Harbor, LI, growing up, visited a couple times; Always loved ocean; Went to Southampton College (on LI) for marine biology; Summer camp job as an EMT, Montauk, included helping on boasts when they took kids on fluke fishing trips; End of summer, worked on the party boat as a mate and went to school; Slept in car on weekends while worked fishing; Party boat guys teased worse than on commercial boats; Mini-heart attack/getting heart surgery;

[End of File WAV\_0036\_001]

[Start of File WAV\_0036\_002]

[00:00] Heart surgery/Wolff-Parkinson-White, a genetic condition; Withdrew from school, lost academic scholarship, then school went bankrupt; Went back working on Viking/party boat for two years, started cod fishing in winters; Started working commercial boat when party boats went to Florida the next winter; Offshore crabbing, Jonah crabs, for a year and a half; At first people were surprised to have a see a female fishing, but now used to seeing her; Took an offer to go on a dragger; Liked scalloping more, does that in summers; Started scalloping on a lobster boat that would put a scallop dredge on it; Meditative aspect to shucking; Recent eleven day/18,000 pound trip cutting for twenty hours at a time; Now know to do more shifts; Had carpal tunnel surgery when first started scalloping;

[04:08] Does dragging now, scalloping day boats in summer; Winter trips three people on boat; Hauling/sorting/boxing/hauling routine; Loose fish "storage"; Most trips about five days, sometimes fill boat 36 hours; Fluke fishing; Squid fishing Hudson Canyon; Same basic nets as kind used in festival competition, specific for different kinds of fish; Will have been fishing five years in March; Plans to go back to school/Stonybrook reopened her college to finish marine biology degree, work with kids to educate next generation about sustainability; Wants to keep apartment in Montauk, probably won't work there; Family, larger scallop fleet in Jersey; Montauk more party/charter boats

[09:10] JGF impression that Montauk is a lot of rich people's summer houses; Changes to Montauk jetties area, talk of selling packout houses, condo development; Hard for Montauk/all of LI younger generation to afford to stay; Families not that happy about her fishing, have no familiarity with industry; Excitement she felt on her first crabbing trip; Family came to festival, may have given them better idea of what she talks about doing; Parents also proud of her, glad she's happy; Feeling of accomplishment she gets from fishing trips; Beautiful sights out at sea;

[13:11] Treatment/teasing by guys on party boats—maybe just "initiation" as they would do to any new person; Tells people when they've crossed the line of respect; Never felt unwelcome; Anytime new, only a day or two for people to see she's a hard worker despite being small;

- [16:29] Has met a lot of the captains' wives before the trips, told them she's just there to make money, they're fine with her going; Ends up feeling like brother/sister or cousin relationship with guys on boat; Would like to have a scallop boat with all girls; Only once on a boat with a bathroom; Prefers using a bucket to having to clean a shared bathroom;
- [19:38] Technique/gear for fishing for Jonah crabs; Jonah crabs are a lobster bycatch but abundant in winter; Lines tangling feet are biggest danger with Jonah crab fishing;
- [23:52] Memorable trip piloting boat/only seeing how big waves were once moon came up; Kind of cool how ocean is very alive in rough weather; Never caught in any storms where feared for life, boats she's on always listen to weather, get back in; Picks boats with good reputations, has people she can check with before signing on to a boat;
- [26:54] Animated feeling being in challenging weather; Laughs when hit by big wave; Avoids boats with scuppers big enough she could wash through after a big wave; Unusual finds—sinks, torpedos, 3 Russian ID cards all wrapped in plastic from 1 ship (gave to Coast Guard), lots of garbage; Won't throw any trash back over/they call her "Little Miss Nature";
- [30:04] Generally fish 60-80 miles off shore, some trips more like 200 miles; Getting good at shucking scallops/pain at first before carpal tunnel surgery; Had "stage fright" at shucking contest this year, hands shaking; Changes in scallop regulations will make it harder for people who do it as main livelihood; Regulations complicated because of state differences in species regulations inside of three miles from shore; Regulations need to be coastal to work; Might work better to just allow fishing so many days a week and keep all the catch; Loves environment but also need see fishing as a food source/natural resource;
- [36:10] Having more people with both commercial fishing and science background might help fix problems with regulations—college looks on her commercial fishing background favorably; Need regulations/there will always be greed; Problems with fluke regulations for party boat business;
- [End of File WAV\_0036\_002]
- [Start of File WAV\_0036\_003]
- [00:00] Great that festival lets people on boats, would also help to have running videos of boats in use to help people understand better; Frustration with her not fitting stereotypical image of a "dirty" fisherman when see her on land; Wearing a Guy Cotton tattoo to support Amanda Wright's new line of skins with fish on them;
- [03:22] Enjoyment at meeting other women in the industry, no others in commercial fishing in Montauk right now; Generally accepted by other fishermen/industry workers once people see she's a good worker; Prefers to be called "fisherman" to avoid any notion that she's favorably treated as a "fisherwoman"; Doesn't want special treatment on boats; Process for bleeding fluke; Her fear of spiders amuses a friend because of the fishing work with bait, etc., not bothering her;
- [End of File WAV\_0036\_003/End of Interview]

## TRANSCRIPT

[Start of File WAV\_0036\_001]

[00:00]

JGF: OK, we're recording. Today is September 23<sup>rd</sup>, Sunday. We're at the Working Waterfront Festival in New Bedford, in the Harbormaster's house. This is Janice Fleuriel and I'm talking with Sarah Broadwell. And I have you listed as a fisherwoman from Montauk.

SB: Right. Yeah. From Montauk, Long Island.

JGF: Well this is exciting for *me*. Because I have a brother who now lives in Huntington.

SB: Oh, OK.

JGF: And I've always said one day I want to get out and see that—the *real* end of the Island.

SB: Yeah, the end. Yes, as they call it. It is pretty cool.

JGF: It sounds pretty neat.

So maybe you could just start, Sarah, by talking about where and when you were born, and, your family history of—I don't know if you grew up in Long Island...

SB: Yeah, nothing, actually, to do with fishing, with my family.

JGF: OK. Well that's always interesting too.

SB: Oh, OK.

JGF: Some people do and some people don't.

SB: Yeah, that's true. That's true.

I was born in New Jersey in Denville. And, growing up I had grandparents *in* Long Island in Sag Harbor. So as a child I got to go out in the summer a couple times and visit. And, I always loved the ocean. And I ended up going to Southampton College for marine biology.

JGF: And is that on Long Island.

SB: Yeah. It's on Long Island. And... I actually—Through *that* I ended up working at a summer camp as an EMT. And, we would take the kids camp—or, fishing, once a week. Fluke fishing out in Montauk. So after doing that—I did that two summers, so it was probably eight weeks a summer. And you had thirty kids. I ended up helping, more—really working on the boat, basically.

And... I got to know the captain and the crew and they were all really friendly. And the one guy had—went to my college. So at the end of the summer I was going back to school and I was done with the camp and he was like, "Why don't you work here on the boat?" And go to school. I said, "Could I do that? I don't really know anything." He's like, you know, "We'll teach you. You've shown that you can untangle lines. And take fish off."

So, he gave me a job. And I actually... I'd sleep in my—I had a little Cabrio. I'd sleep in my Cabrio in the parking lot. Out in Montauk.

JGF: Is that a Volkswagen?

SB: It's a little Volkswagen, right. Because I'd go fishing—Friday night go striped bass fishing. And then Saturday I'd go all day fluke fishing. And then striped bass Saturday night. I'd sleep in my car, do it Sunday. And Sunday night I'd drive home.

Which was, an hour away. It's not that bad. But you're not going to go back and forth.

And... I *really really really* liked working on the boats. And, honestly—The *party* boat guys as far as...like, men and fishing. I had the hardest time with some of them. Honestly.

JGF: You mean like the charter boats?

SB: No, it was like the mates on the party boat. Just compared to now that I'm commercial fishing. I really don't have—They were merciless on this boat, the way they would tease me and stuff. So it was almost like, I got past that. It was like, "Whatever!" You know, "Big deal!" But it's only certain people normally. I've never had problems with the captains, with the first mate. It would be like, you know somebody that—I don't know if it's just they don't want a girl around or if they just don't want somebody working harder. Do you know what I mean? It was very—

JGF: Yeah. They're afraid they're going to get shown up.

SB: —different. It was *something*. Yeah.

So, I really *liked* it. And it was fun. But I wasn't planning on *continuing* it. And then I was actually, still going to college, and I had, like a mini-heart basically. I had an arrhythmia. And I ended up going in the hospital that night. And they restarted my heart.

JGF: Oh my God!

SB: They had to restart it. It was like two hundred and eight beats a minute. And they said, "You've got to go the doctor." And I went the next day. And they said, "You need heart surgery."

[Interruption/Paused/End of File WAV\_0036\_001]

[Start of File WAV\_0036\_002]

[00:00]

[Talking about the interruption/people sometimes thinking oral history sign is for an exhibit]

JGF: So they restarted your heart....

SB: Oh, yeah. And I ended up going to the doctor. And I had to get, an ablation for Wolff-Parkinson... Am I on a time limit here?

JGF: No... Well I have another interview at three, but...

SB: No, I'm not going to take that long, but I can summarize if I need to.

JGF: No, please don't!

SB: [laughs] I ended up having to get heart surgery. And, pretty immediate. And it was in Wolff-Parkinson-White, which is a genetic. Which just—Thank God it never happened on the boat! You know, because if I'd been anywhere... I was right by a hospital and I made it there within thirty minutes. And, your heart's a muscle. It can't run like that. They were like—well just thank God I caught it.

And... That kind of... Well I lost my school—I had a nine thousand dollar scholarship. Academic scholarship, and I lost it. Because I withdrew, like, immediately.

JGF: Oh God!

SB: So, I could have gone back and done all the *paperwork*. But then they actually—the school went bankrupt.

JGF: Oh...!

SB: So I'm [?] poor and I went, "All right. What am I going to do?" And I really loved fishing. And it was so much fun. I'm like, you know what—and honestly, having a near-death experience, or just—it kind of put things in a different perspective. And I'm like, "I'm just going to go, be *happy* for a while." Because I just really—Just being on the ocean I felt *free* and it was very... I don't know if you fish, but it's like a very... It's a different experience than I *ever* had.

And... So I went back. And I got back on the—Viking, was the party boat. And I worked there full time until... That whole year. I worked there like *two* years, every day. In the winter we started cod fishing, which was really cool.

And then the *next* winter they went to *Florida* with the boats. And I'm like, "I'm not going to Florida." So actually, there was, one of the people that was a *local* had been fishing. Met me and was like, "Well you know you could probably work on our commercial boat." He said, "You know, you're a hard worker." He's like, "I'll ask my boss." And he asked his captain. And his captain's like, "Whatever." You know. "I'll take whoever out. If you want to try."

So I went out and it was, an offshore, like crab boat. Jonah crabs and a lobster boat. And I did that. And I started that and that was like, "This is..." It was pretty *cool*. I've *never* been out... Like we were out for three days at a time. And it's pretty neat.

And I ended up being with him—the other guy ended up quitting. I ended up being the first mate for, you know, I was there for a year and a half with him. Which was kind of—In the beginning it was like, people like, "Who's this girl?" You know. And *now* it's like, "Oh, it's Sarah!" You know. "Just Sarah working. It's no big deal."

JGF: [laughs]

SB: So... I actually had never tried anything else. Like, dragging. And I got offered a job on a dragger and I talked to my captain. He said, "Go ahead. Go try it. I'm not going to keep you here if you want to try other stuff." So I ended up dragging, that whole winter. And... Which was... That's a pretty intense thing. I mean I like it. But I kind of like, scalloping more. Which is what I do in the summers. I go work on a—The lobster boat I had worked on... When they opened up the general category around here... He put a scallop dredge on and we started scalloping.

So... I started scalloping with them. And I really... I *enjoy* it. It's kind of meditating like, opening the scallops.

JGF: Oh... OK! The whole sort of rhythm of it or something?

SB: Yeah! It's kind of, just, peace—you stand back there and you open scallops. Now, eventually... Last summer I ended up on a big trip boat. And we did an eleven day, eighteen thousand pound, *trip*. Where we were, standing there for twenty—We didn't really know how to do this. Now you, do it like, shifts, more. We were twenty hours cutting. And then everybody would lay down for four. And then we were twenty hours cutting.

JGF: Oh...my God!

SB: And that was... That was pretty intense. You know, we ran out of gloves...

JGF: Did your wrists hold up?

SB: I actually had carpal tunnel surgery right in the beginning when I started scalloping with—On the lobster boat, I got it. Up to my elbows. My shoulders were asleep. They don't hurt at all now. I'm glad I got it done. But... Yeah I was wondering about the trip. But they actually held up fine. Most—It was a pretty neat

experience. I bought a Toyota Tacoma after that trip [laughs]. So it was very profitable!

JGF: Is it bigger to sleep in? [laughs]

[04:08]

SB: [laughs] Yeah.

And then... Let me see. Then he sold that boat. And I ended up *dragging*. And that's what I've been doing since. So in the summer here I fill in like... I enjoy scalloping, so all the time I jump on day boats, and go out and help out, whenever, you know, we need a person for the day. I'll go scalloping. And, actually I'm supposed to leave tomorrow morning at three to go fishing.

JGF: Oh!

SB: So. I've got to get back to Montauk tonight.

JGF: Three in the middle of the night?

SB: Three this morning. Three in the morning, tonight.

JGF: Yeah. But you're used to not getting a lot of sleep. Right?

SB: Yeah. No, you don't get any sleep. Only... In the wintertime we go out, and it's me and the captain and another guy. And, he and I work the back deck. And you basically—you're out there. We do a tow, it fills up the pen. You sort it. Put it all in boxes downstairs—the cartons. And it's time to haul back again. And that's every—you know, every three hours. So basically thirty-six hours you got the boat filled. So you get a couple hours sleep on the ride *in*. But we'll take turns. And then we'll get in and pack out, takes a day, too. Because...

JGF: Wow...!

SB: You fill up all the cartons. And then, all your empty ice pens you fill up with loose fish. And every part of the floor you fill up with loose fish. And then you have every empty basket you've got to fill with loose fish. So, it's crazy. It's pretty cool, though. It is pretty neat.

JGF: Huh! So most of your trips are not, like extended days at sea?

SB: No. Actually most of my trips are about five days. We get lucky sometimes. We fill the boat up in thirty-six. But that's wishful thinking.

JGF: Oh.... All right [laughs].

SB: But... You know, in the winter we'll go out. We'll do, fluke fishing in New Jersey. So we'll catch fluke. Go pack out in Point Pleasant. Then we'll go to Hudson Canyon, go squid fishing for like, three or four days. And then, come back in.

JGF: So. It's still... You said it was all dragging. Is it still the kinds of nets that they would use up here for like, you know flounder and stuff?

SB: Yeah. We don't use a flat net. It's—Yeah, we're [?] for whiting and squid. But it's the same—Like they had the net mending competition. It's the same basic thing. Just the different *kinds* of nets, are more specific for different kinds of fish. So that's pretty much what I've been doing.

JGF: So how many years now?

SB: It'll be five years in March, actually.

JGF: Five years in March. And do you think you're good for a while with it?

SB: Actually, I have a plan. They reopened the college that had shut down. The State bought it. And then when I talked to them, and they're actually—Stonybrook is a pretty well known school, and they bought it. And they're doing sustainability, in the

environment. So I was *really* interested and I don't have a whole lot of credits, *left*. I mean I was, you know on my way to graduating eventually. And, so they said they'll transfer all my credits. And, I would like to finish, have a marine biology degree. And, actually I'd like to teach, like, younger kids. Because I honestly think that the way to—you know, at least make some kind of change, is you've got to start before, now. Much as *I* would love to go, make a difference, I honestly—I'm only one person. But. You know, if I could, put a spark, you know in classrooms of kids. I mean down the line maybe they can help. And then that way I can still go scalloping in the summer.

JGF: Yeah! That's true, too.

SB: You know. But, yeah, then have a retirement plan. And the health insurance, is kind of expensive. We don't have any.

JGF: Yeah! You're on your own, right?

SB: I pay my own. Yeah.

JGF: Huh! That's interesting.

So you would want to be, whatever teaching would you want, the difference you're talking about is environmental sustainability?

SB: Right. I'd *love* to teach marine science or something like. And just show—like, where I'm from in New Jersey I never knew anything. I mean, I had such a fascination with it. But a lot of people inland don't have any idea.

JGF: Yeah. Where in—you mentioned the town. But where is that? Is it inland in New Jersey, where you grew up?

SB: Yeah. It's up by, like Northern Jersey. We're about forty-five minutes from the city. So it's inland. I've been to, Wildwood. You know, but it's not like, being on the ocean. It's a little different.

JGF: Right. Yeah.

SB: So that's kind of, what I *like* to do. I'm twenty-seven. So I'm like, by the time I'm thirty, if I'm done with college... I'm still saving up money to..., get a house I guess, is the next, big thing. Right? [laughs]

JGF: Yeah. And do you figure you'd want to stay around Montauk if you can.

SB: I'd like, Montauk. But, it's very isolated. It's a *nice* place. I'd probably keep my apartment. A really beautiful, little apartment. I'd probably keep that if I could, financially. I don't see why I'd ever... But as far as living permanently I was thinking more along the Jersey coast. My family's all in New Jersey. And honestly, Jersey is a much larger scallop fleet than, Montauk. There's like, four, general category scallop boats in Montauk. It's not really that popular there. Some of these boats from New Bedford actually come down and fish out of there. I know some of these people. But, the fishing fleet there itself isn't generally scalloping. It's more draggers, a couple lobster boats. It's not this big [laughs].

JGF: I was going to say it's probably not as New Bedford anywhere, right?

SB: It's not as big. It's more of a touristy, commercial—or you know, like recreational. There's a lot of party boats, charter boats, there.

[09:10]

JGF: Oh...! Right. Right. I was going to sort of, ask about that. Because I mean, those of us who know nothing about Montauk just know about it as a place where rich people have their summer houses.



SB: Oh really? [laughs]

JGF: [laughs] So is it... So the fishing that's done there, has sort of been affected by that culture?

SB: Well, actually there's talk of them selling the main packout house right now. And I've heard rumors of condos being put up near the jetties. I don't know if any of that's true. But, that would really stink. You know it's like, Montauk's been, pretty much the fishing capital down there for *years*. People used to take the train from the city just to come out fishing. And it would be really sad if they ended up changing that just to put up housing, because it looks nice to [?] live there. You know [chuckles] what I mean? Go drive out to the jetties and take a look! How 'bout that? [laughs] So. We'll see what happens.

JGF: Yeah. Is Montauk one of those places where it's hard for the younger generation to stay because it's expensive.

SB: Yes. And even all of Long Island, they're saying they're having an outpouring of all the younger people. I mean... As far as—you know, health insurance is a *major* issue. For, people my age, after you're twenty-five I believe you're not under your parents' plan. And, if you're not working like fulltime it's hard to find it. You know. So... And the housing is *so* expensive, that you can't even—can't afford to find a place. So, that makes it difficult.

JGF: Yeah...

SB: Well. We'll see what happens, but... I don't think longterm is—I *like* Montauk. But I don't think I'm going to end up there for, permanent. Yeah. There's too much more out there to see.

JGF: So what did your family think when you ended up going fishing?

SB: My family's not really, they weren't really that happy about it. They really don't *know* a lot about it.

JGF: I would ima—I could see how a family that had no—

SB: Yeah...

JGF: —connection with the industry wouldn't necessarily.

SB: And like *I* never—That's one of the coolest things to me, is I didn't know *anything*. So when you're like—“We're going out...” I was like shaking with anticipation. My first crabbing trip. I was like—even thinking back, I was like, “Are we there yet? Are we there yet? Are we there yet?” Because I had *no* idea. Just the thought of pulling a *trap* up, and seeing what's in it was pretty cool. *Now* it's a little *not* as cool. It's a little *old*. But, it's pretty—it's new to them and it's hard to explain, even how the gear works. You know, I say, “The doors open, spread the net out.” And they just don't have any idea. But, they actually came out for the weekend here. And, might have gotten a little more into it.

You know, my father's concerned about longterm. You know, “What are you going to do?” My mom's more concerned about safety issues.

JGF: I would imagine she is!

SB: Yeah. So... And they worry more than I do. But you know that's—I think that's the nature of parents [laughs]. So.

JGF: Yeah [laughs]. I would think so too.

SB: But they're *proud* of me. You know? But they're—and, you know, as long as I'm happy, too. That's another... But they see that I enjoy this. You know?

And it's... *I think it's an accomplishment. For anybody.*

JGF: Oh gosh! That's for sure!

SB: You come in from a big trip and there's not a whole lot else. And you feel pretty great. You know. You got the boat loaded. You've been working really hard. You can go sit at home for an hour or something. But it's really kind of cool. You know. You actually *did*, a lot of work. And it pays off.

JGF: Yeah!

I think it's hard for people—I mean I've heard so many people now over these four years talk about, whatever that something is, the way you talked about the freedom of being out and I think that people who haven't done it, you know *can't* understand it, necessarily, so...

SB: Yeah. It's... I was out, last week. We were whiting fishing. And it's so nice this time of the year. It's still warm out, you know? And I was out at night. And we fished like around the clock. So I know like one—Just the other night I was staring up at the stars. And I was thinking like, I wish my mom or my sister, could *see* this! Because, maybe then they would see a little glimmer of it. You know, like... It's so beautiful. And it's so peaceful. And it's like, you're not going to find that a whole lot of other places, you know.

And I mean I—I love *dolphins* and all that... That's really—it's so cool. You see whales. You see dolphins. You see sea turtles, sharks. Everything. It's pretty—it's pretty neat.

[13:11]

JGF: That's neat. So, can you talk a little—You said it was on the party boats when you sort of got, I don't know if *harassed* is quite the right word.

SB: Yeah...

JGF: What would they, sort of, the guys do or say, that...

SB: It was just... Well it was just in the beginning. I just think it—Maybe it was being a girl or maybe they were trying to just, see how much I could take.

JGF: How green you were?

SB: Or, see if they could do enough stuff to get me... You know? To them it was like a game. I don't think it was every malicious.

But things like, you know we go out tuna—They would do tuna trips. And I *begged* them to *take* me. Because I'd never even seen a tuna. They said, "Alright, we'll bring you." And I was like, "OK. Great." You know? I wasn't getting paid for the trip or anything. I just wanted to go see.

And then, I remember it was... It was *pretty* rough out. It was *pretty* cold out. And there were no fish around. So there was about four customers fishing. And they guys all decide they were going to go to sleep, but somebody needed to *chum*. And the guy was like, "Alright. You stay here in the bow and you chum." And this was six o'clock at night. And at six o'clock in the *morning* when the captain got up, and I'm still out there throwing *chum*, he's like, "What the hell!" He's like, "Get your ass inside.

These assholes!" You know what I mean.

JGF: [laughs]

SB: [laughs] So. It was like—"I'm not..." You know, you tell me to do something I'm going to do it. You know? Just—It was just stupid things. Or, you know...It wasn't anything, like I said, I never felt unwelcome to the point where I would leave.

JGF: Yeah!

SB: But it—Definitely, you’ve got to get used to. It’s like, being in a locker room.  
You know what I mean?

JGF: There’s just the whole initiation aspect—

SB: Yeah...

JGF: —that you’re new regardless—

SB: *Regardless* if I’m a girl or not. Yeah. You know?

They, tease *everybody*. And that—Maybe that for *me* in the beginning, it just took me a little bit to be like, “Whatever!” Brush it off, kind of thing.

And now... I was telling, some of these other guys harass me, I have a really good sense of humor. It takes a *whole lot* to offend me. You know?

But there... There *is* a line, you know. You have to put your foot down. And, I don’t need people to like me. I just need them to respect me. And, that’s kind of what I got, at this point. So.

JGF: That’s good. Yeah.

SB: You know, I’m not here to make friends. I’m here to make *money*. And if you’re not here to make money too you can get off the boat! You know what I mean?  
[laughs]

JGF: [laughs]

SB: So... I really haven’t had any, you know... I’ve had, you know, one or two little *run-ins*. And I—You just put your foot down right then and there, and, and I’ve never had a problem. The guy was like, “Oop! Sorry.” You know, stepped over the line, kind of thing. You know, little threat here and there [laughs].

But nothing—Like I said, I’ve never felt, unwelcome. More than—I mean, *most* of the people I’ll say, you know, “Can I go fishing?” You know, I’ve tried several different industries, like scalloping, dragging and lobstering. And, you know, you’re brand new walking up saying, “You want to take me out?” And here you are, you know? You know, I’m five, one, a hundred and twenty pounds. You know what I mean? It’s not like I’m a big fisherman. But usually most of the people are like, “Alright. We’ll take you out.” And after a day, two days, they’re like, anybody says—I’ve had captains, they’re like, “Don’t underestimate Sarah just because she’s small.” You know what I mean?

So it doesn’t... Like fishing, I was telling before, it’s—it’s not really about, like who you are, what you do. But it’s kind of like—it’s how you work! You know what mean? If you get the job done, and you’re fast and you’re a hustler and you’re a hard worker, they *want* you there. I mean, I have people asking me to go fishing with them. So, that’s pretty cool.

JGF: That’s great. Yeah.

[16:29]

SB: And the important thing, too—especially in a small community with being a female, I’ve met a *lot* of the captains’ wives. They’ll come down and they’ll *meet* me. And I have a discussion with them. And they’re like, “*No* problem! Go out!” You know what I mean? I can *understand* that. You know, here you are. They’ve nev—  
“Oh, some girl’s coming out to go fishing?” You know, so they come and they meet me and I talk to them and I tell them—

JGF: So you’ll actually just bring it up and clear the air on that?

SB: —“Nope. I’m not going out there to fool around with *anybody*.” You k now, “I’m going out there to go fishing.” And I don’t want that to be, hanging over me, either. That kind of—“Don’t take me out, if that’s what you’re thinking. Because that’s not going to *happen*.” You know?  
Well we can—we *joke* about... Like I said, I have a sense of humor. But it’s like, never—there’s just a line that, you know, you don’t cross.

JGF: That’ interesting.

SB: So it works pretty well. You know? It’s just, kind of like being with your sister or your cousin, kind of thing. That’s kind of how people treat me.

JGF: That’s cool.

SB: Yeah.

JGF: It’s interesting, because—Well of course every year we’ve asked whoever we’ve interviewed the whole thing about superstitions and you know, how do you feel about having women on the boats and this and that. And... For *some* reason, this is the first year—maybe because we’re actually interviewing the women about it—that they’ve mentioned that it’s the captain’s *wives*—

SB: Oh!

JGF: —or the fishermen’s *wives* that have the—and it’s like, well that makes perfect sense! But it had just never come up before.

SB: Yeah...

JGF: And now I’ve heard it three times this weekend.

SB: Oh really? Oh, that’s pretty interesting [laughs].  
Yeah, but it—I guess, I understand...

JGF: Oh, it makes sense! [laughs]

SB: Yeah... Even just out of curiosity, too. Like, “Oh here’s a girl that wants to go fishing.” I mean, “Meet her.” It’s never been someone storming down to the boat, being like, “You want to go fishing with *my* husband?” You know, it’s been like, “I heard you want to go fishing... I’d like to meet you.” You know it’s never been like—I never felt, you know, like threatened or anything.

JGF: Yeah.

SB: And... I don’t know, I have a pretty good reputation I think, too. You know.

JGF: Yeah. It becomes clear that you’re there for the money and the work, and...

SB: Yeah! Yeah. And even—even in the *town*, I mean, you know, I kind of get along with everybody. I don’t really have a problem with anybody unless I have a reason to *have* a problem. But... you know, it’s like... I don’t know.  
I don’t think of the whole—I know it’s great that there are women fishing. But there should be *more* because it doesn’t really *matter*. Like I’m saying, what you are, it’s like... Just come and *try* it. I know there are a lot of hard working women out there. You know? So, we’ll see.

JGF: Interesting. That is interesting.

SB: Yeah.  
I’d love to have a scallop boat with all girls. That’d be pretty cool.

JGF: Oh...! That would be the next *Deadliest Catch* show. I think. Wouldn’t it be?

SB: The only thing we’d have to—We’d have to put a... There’s no—I’ve never been on a boat with a bathroom. That’s another thing.

JGF: You’ve *never* had a bathroom on your boat?

SB: There was—I did one time. I did a fill-in on the Perception, which is like a really nice, big, with a shower and everything. And I had my own state room [laughs]. Everybody did. Had like four bedrooms on the boat. And, had a shower and a flushing toilet. But the rest of the boats, you got a bucket.

JGF: I was going to say, sometimes don't they call it the "BYOB" bring your own bucket? [laughs]

SB: Oh really? No..., I just... No I just deal with it.

JGF: But there's a bucket?

SB: Yeah, there's a bucket. Yeah.

JGF: And then you just toss?

SB: Yeah, you just toss, throw over. So I don't know if I had a boat full of girls I might have to change [laughs] you know?

JGF: Well hey, you know. If it works for one, there's got to be others out there.

SB: Yeah, and you don't have to clean it. You know? That's—My dad said, "You need a bathroom on the boat." And I'm like, I don't want to clean up after those boys.

JGF: Oh that's true too.

SB: Yeah. No thank you! So...[laughs]

JGF: Oh that's interesting [laughs]

SB: [laughs] Yeah.

[19:38]

JGF: We always like to ask if people have fishing exper—Well actually I want to ask before I get to the issues of like, memorable trips or storms or whatever, but... How does the crab fishing you talked about—you called them Jonah crabs?

SB: Yeah, the Jonah crabs.

JGF: I don't even know what that means, so if you could explain those. But how it compares to say, the crab fishing in Alaska, which is the only thing probably a lot of people are familiar with.

SB: OK. Jonah crabs are like stone crabs, the ones in Florida with the really big claws on them. And we... They're actu—they're pretty abundant. No one...there doesn't seem to be a big fishery. They're actually not worth very much. They're worth like, fifty cents, usually, a pound. So, to make a trip, you have to, you know *load up* the boat. And we would go out. And each string of traps, there's forty on a string. So you bring them up. And, you put them on the rail. And I'd empty them all. And you got, tanks, underneath the deck, with little chutes. So you put the crab in the chute and they go underneath the deck.

JGF: Oh...! OK.

SB: Yeah. And there are lobsters in there. I mean we were *going* for lobster. We were trying. But, in the wintertime there's so many Jonah crabs that we just, fill up the boat with them. So... I don't—I watch the shows. They definitely—They put out, *gigantic*, traps. Ours are like, four by, maybe two or something. The end pots are larger because they hold the ends of the line down.

JGF: Alright. So they weigh more.

SB: So they're really—they're like a refrigerator almost. They're pretty big.

So... And then we just stack them on—Actually we stack them on the back. Because they're all attached, on one line. And, I stack the forty traps in the back. And we all kind of move out of the way. And then you set them. So, that's a little bit different. And the boat I was on, he had, thirty strings.

JGF: Wow!

SB: Twelve hundred.

JGF: Wow...! How big is the boat, then?

SB: It was only, fifty feet. We did one at a time. We were out there—we would try to do fifteen or sixteen. We'd try to do half of the set the first day. You'd start at like four in the morning, and we were usually done by like, twelve at night or something. Then we'd lay down, for a couple hours. He'd get up—he was funny, he'd set an alarm, for every twenty minutes. To get up, check the radar. Which is... You know, we're a little boat in the middle of the ocean. You know, I don't want to rely on someone else's radar to not hit us, kind of thing.

And then you'd get up, and then the next day you'd finish. And we'd steam in to Point Judith, and pack out there.

So... I don't know if that, answers...

JGF: Yeah, it does. It does, for sure.

SB: Oh, OK.

JGF: But would he ever have *all* of those traps on the boat at one time? Could the boat fit them all?

SB: If you're moving... If you're moving traps and gear, we have had, like maybe two hundred. But you stack them up really high. It's not usually, something—unless you're moving gear.

JGF: And how are you hauling them back on the boat? Is there a winch kind of thing?

SB: There's... I can't even remember the name of that. Yeah we just have a little hauler, that's in the front.

JGF: Yeah. It's like mechanical?

SB: Yeah. It's hydraulically run. And he's got a little net locker underneath it. So the line comes up and *half* the line goes in there and the other half is kind of like, down the boat. On the traps. So you like stack them like that. So, I just can't remember the name of the hauler.

JGF: That's OK. It's not like this hand hauling...?

SB: No, no. That's like... If you're like, doing single or, two traps. But these are really heavy. And they're pretty deep. And, you can hear, sometimes if you get, like mud, in there, the line starts *creaking*, and you're like, "C'mon, girl!" You know? [laughs]

JGF: [laughs].

SB: So that's a little different.

JGF: Huh! And now, when they come up on the boat—because I mean I haven't seen *The Deadliest Catch* that many times, but I have this image of this *huge*, loaded—and well like you said, their traps are bigger, but—swinging right at people.

SB: Yeah.

JGF: Do you have that kind of risk?

SB: Ours come up..., come up to the block. And they're hanging at the block. But they're only four feet long. So then you just swing them up onto the railing, kind of thing. *Pretty much* with, *that* kind of fishing, your biggest danger was just getting

your feet stuck in the line, going out. Because if you're setting out, and you have your—you're not standing in the right spot, there's not a—you know, it's not great. So, I've only seen one close call. And that was—It wasn't me. But I was watching [laughs] and *that* was not good. You know?

JGF: Oh... Yeah.

SB: That's pretty scary. We all wore our, knives on our, skins and stuff.

JGF: Oh. So if you had to cut the line?

SB: Yeah.

JGF: Mm hm.

SB: Just, kind of... Yeah. Just, *don't* put your feet in any, coils. You know? [laughs] [23:52]

JGF: Right [laughs]. Yeah.

So, have you had any memorable trips like with storms, or any experiences like that?

SB: I've had... I mean, I work in the winter. So the winter gets, pretty—it gets pretty rough. I mean, I've been out in fifty knots, fifty-five.

There was—This last winter, we were on our way in I think from the, Jersey fluke trip and I was on watch. And, you have to sit there and you got to pull the throttle back every time the boat goes over a really big wave. Because you actually become like, airborne. And I was *doing*—doing fine. I'm like, "This is fine." And the moon came up. And when the moon came up you could see how big the fuckin' waves were.

They were, *giiiiigantic*. And you're like, "I wish the moon, didn't come up." And—

JGF: Wow!

SB: They were just, crazy big. But it's not—In a way, it's kind of *cool*. Like I know... It's... Like when we're out there, in the rough weather, I know it's not good but it's kind of neat. I mean the ocean is *so* alive. And the clouds are always *so* beautiful. And the sky is like a, weird, grayish blue. And it's just like, "Wow!" You know? And you can *hear* the big waves. Like, the boat we're on doesn't have a shelter deck. Which is a wall. And a lot of boats have. Which, I don't know why we don't, but. You'll be standing back there—I usually bleed all the *fluke*—and I'm standing in the back. So I got my head down. You got your rain on, pulled tight. You got your skins on. And, you can *hear* like the wave, coming. Like once in a while there's a big one. And... Usually the captain will stick his head out. He'll be like, "Everybody still on? Alright." You know, "Just checking."

JGF: [laughs]

SB But as far as like, storm... I don't know if I've ever been caught. I've been lucky enough that we listened to the weather and, get inside when we have to.

JGF: Yeah... So you've never feared for your actual life kind of like, you never felt like you were in one when, "Oops, maybe we won't get back in from this?"

SB: No... I think if I felt—I don't think I'd ever want to feel like that. I honestly, pick the boats and the people I go out with. You know, I've had... Oh yeah, there's been plenty of boats around that, they're looking for *crew*. And you know—they're looking for *crew* because no one wants to go *out* with them. [laughs] [You got to?] know enough to come back in! Yeah, so... Boats like that I just stay off of. You know, I know—I know enough not to *go* kind of thing. And people are like, they—Pretty much I have, like a—like I was saying earlier to these people, I don't—I never had any family, and friends moving in to Montauk, I just didn't *know* anybody. And,

in the five years I've been there, six years, I kind of have my own little, like *family*. These fishermen have almost like—there's a bunch of people that have no *family* and they're just fishermen. And we all kind of like, we're all *friends* in a way. So I can call up, you know [*Mike?*] and be like, you know, "What do you think of this boat?" And he's like, "Oh, that's great!" Or I'll be like, "What do you think..." and he's like, "No, no, just hold off."

JGF: Oh...good!

SB: So and these are guys that have been fishing their whole life. So it's good to have a little guidance. You know? And people that you can actually trust. You know? So that—that way, I've never been... I try to stay away from being worried about my life out there.

JGF: Oh...that's good.

SB: Yeah.

[26:54]

JGF: But it's interesting you talked about the weather. Because this...guy that I ended up interviewing this morning [Phil Ashworth]. He just showed up, and, has been a fisherman and stuff. He said, he would have—he liked the, sort of challenging reason better. For whatever, you know, weird reason.

SB: It's *kind of neat*. I mean... Where else... I mean, I feel sometimes like I'm on Splash Mountain, at Great Adventure. You know, where you stand there with the *huge waves*.

JGF: [laughs] Right.

SB: And it's just an animated feeling. I mean, everything is so, *alive*. I don't know what other way to describe it. It's just... It's pretty amazing. It'd be like, you know those, tornado chasers?

JGF: Yes!

SB: Maybe it's something like with the, adrenaline, or just being in...

JGF: That close to the forces of nature?

SB: Yeah... It's pretty—it's pretty awesome. It really is.

I—Actually I'm like one of those people, I get hit by a wave, I'm cracking up. I turn around, I'm like, "Did you guys see that!?" You know.

JGF: [laughs]

SB: And... I've...

Oh, another thing. I don't go on a boat where the scuppers—the scuppers are the holes in the deck where the waters run out. So when a big waves come over, it clears the deck, really quick. It runs out the sides. I try not to go on a boat where I can fit through the scuppers.

JGF: That's a good rule! Isn't it? [laughs]

SB: Yeah... I mean, you think about a big wave comes, you're knocked to your feet. Which happens. And all the water's rushing out. And in a really big, rough, sea... You'd better—You know what I mean? It wouldn't be good to be—And some of these boats have, really gigantic scuppers.

So, I don't know if that's a realistic one! But that one works for me. You know?

[laughs]

JGF: [laughs] That's interesting!

SB: Yeah.



JGF: Have you ever had any unusual finds come up in your nets?

SB: Oh..., we've caught, you know kitchen sinks. We've caught a couple of, probably some kind of torpedos or such. Everybody has stories about catching stuff, that— They give out flyers of, different munitions and everything that they used to test. So you're like, "Ooookay." We've caught some ID cards from some Russian ship one time, which was kind of cool. Like three different—we sent them in to the Coast Guard.

JGF: That must be back from when—before the two hundred mile limit or something?

SB: I don't know. Because this was recently—it was last summer. And they were all wrapped together in plastic. It was *very strange*. You know? And they were like three guys from the same boat. Capt—or corporal or something? So we, sent them to the Coast Guard. It was very like—"You guys might want to check into this. See if these guys are, running around the United States [laughs] or something."

I'm just trying to think of... You know we've caught, like I said, a kitchen sink, which... You catch a lot of garbage. That's one thing that I, I *hate*—I don't throw anything over. Like they call me "Little Miss Nature." And I'll have like, all the garbage piled in—not that, you know—you're not supposed to throw anything other than—you can throw paper and stuff over, no problem. But. I don't throw *anything* over. And I... I've *brought in*, like wire, and line and stuff, to bring to the dump. Instead of throwing it in the water. Because... I don't understand why you would be polluting your workspace kind of thing. You know, you're kind of, screwing yourself, in a way.

So. Not everybody thinks like that. *Some* guys are really good and just some don't seem to care as much. So.

But there's plenty of trash out there.

[30:04]

JGF: Huh. Interesting.

And how far out are you going? Where...?

SB: Well, it depends. We go down to the Hudson Canyon, which is south, off of... Well, if you go from New Jersey. And, that's usually for squid. So I would say, you know, we generally go like sixty to eighty miles. But I've been, to Munson's, which I believe... It took us thirty-six hours to get there.

JGF: Wow!

SB: So it's got to be, close to two hundred miles, or something like that. It's close to the Canadian line. So I'm not sure where exactly it is. I'd have to look on chart. But, I've been out there. You know.

We went that—scallop trip, the eighteen thousand trip scallop trip we did. Took us a day and a half to get out there. And it was like—It was kind of, it was like, not scary, but you're like, "We are so far away from land right now." It's a very, like, humbling feeling. You know? You're this tiny little speck out on the, *gigantic* ocean. So, that's kind of neat.

JGF: Huh!

Did it take you very long to get good at shucking scallops?

SB: When I started I was *awful*. Because I'd been—I knew how to open clams from the party boat. We'd open, twenty, thirty bushels on the way out to the cod fishing. That was—I *liked* that. And then we started the scalloping. And, my hands, like I

said, they were hurting so badly that I'd be there shaking. And I'm trying to open, because my hands—they just *hurt*.

JGF: They wouldn't want to squeeze anymore?

SB: No, it was from the pain. It was just like—It was really... I couldn't sleep at night. My arms were asleep. It got really bad. And then I was—Then I got the surgery done. And it, didn't hurt anymore. And... I, I just—I guess, probably that summer that I was working on the, lobster boat, we started scalloping. It—you know, a couple months, I got into it. And once it didn't hurt, then I started just, trying to go faster. And, [?] pretty fast now.

JGF: Yeah... Yeah, I couldn't believe when I saw the contest for the first time. It was like...

SB: Oh...! I wish—I haven't even been scalloping, and I'm like I didn't realize I had stage fright until I got up there. And my hands were shaking so badly.

JGF: Oh, did you do it this year?

SB: Yeah. That I had a hard time getting the knife, into the scallop. Because my hands were a little shaky [laughs]. I was like, "Whatever!"

JGF: That stage fright thing, that's interesting!

SB: Yeah! I guess so! I don't know, maybe. So that was kind of cool. Yeah, my mom and my dad came and watched that. Yeah. That was pretty neat.

JGF: How'd you do?

SB: I did all right. There was like fifteen people. But, yeah. I did all right.

JGF: That's great!

SB: Yeah! Maybe we'll see what happens next year.

JGF: It's probably the most popular event, I think, at the Festival.

SB: Oh, yeah. And they had the, net mending earlier. And, one of the other girls—Lynn[?], she's coming in later, she did that. You'll have to have her tell you [laughs].

JGF: I wonder if I have her... Nope, she's going to be in the other building with somebody else. But yeah, she'll have to mention that.

What do you think about all the regulations and things? I don't know, how much you...

SB: Yeah... They definitely—Like they just changed, all the scallop regulations. And I honestly am not—like I said I haven't been scalloping since last summer. I know they kind of, did the—the general category's four hundred pounds a day. And, I'm not sure how they came up with it. But a lot of people I know that have been scalloping as their main livelihood kind of, don't know what to do now. Because, they're not allowed, hardly *anything* compared to what they were. Before you were allowed four hundred pounds a day. You could go, whenever you want. And now they're doing you're allowed, a certain number of *days*, based on your history.

JGF: Oookay! Right.

SB: And... Things like, the fluke regulations. Where, outside of three miles is considered federal waters. Inside is state. Now, we have Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. All within, these teeny tiny little area. Now, New Jersey's allowed, let's say fifteen hundred pounds of fluke and New York's allowed let's say thirty pounds. *I don't get it. I don't know—No one's been able to explain to me that's a fisherman.* Because that does not make any sense. If you really want—If you really want something to work, a regulation, it's got to be, coastal. And

they're basing—I know that they base everything on past catch and past history, and I've gone to school for marine biology. And I had a fisheries class. They gave you equations to plug these numbers in. And they don't work. I don't really know what else they should do. But, as far as the regulations they just—they're *not* realistic. And, if you're not allowed any fluke, what do you tell the net? "OK, don't catch any fluke!" You know? It's just, not—it's not discriminatory about what kind of fish it catches.

JGF: Right! And then are people in the process of tossing the bycatch, if there are too many fluke, so they can go get something else or something?

SB: Well... I don't know. On some boats they might. Let's say if your jumbo fluke is worth more than, let's say, regular fluke. And, you save a basket of regular just in case you don't catch your jumbo. And at the end of the day, you've got to get rid of some, well you're going to get—You know what I mean? I don't know if it would ever work, but... If they could have like, let's say you go fishing four days a week. You know what I mean? And you can keep everything you catch?

JGF: Right. And not by species.

SB: Yeah. *Not* only would it, cut back on the fuel, everybody's burning, the *time*, everybody's out fishing. But it would *totally*, help the fisheries. Because how is it that you... I don't, like I'm saying, these rules don't work that well. And that's kind of like—I'd like to go back to *school*, and their whole thing's sustainability now. And there's got to be something we can do here. You know, it just... This isn't working anymore. And *arguing* isn't going to help. And I... I don't consider myself against the environment. I mean I *love* the environment. You know? But, you're not just going to stop fishing! You know what I mean. Fish are a food source. It's a natural resource. Just like, plant. You know? Just like, cows. You know, the *farmers* and the fishermen. So, it's like, I understand that they're *animals*. But, it's not like you're just going out there to, you know hurt... [?] these people don't *bend*, at all, sometimes. And people get on the extremes. You know? And, I don't know. Ah. I don't know.

[36:10]

JGF: It's funny. It starts to feel like—the last couple years that I've interviewed people that are in the sciences end of it, *too* and... That that's almost like maybe fishing's next frontier's going to be these people like you and another woman I interviewed earlier who, have both the science background *and* the actual fishing experience.

SB: Right.

JGF: So they can try to bring the two together and make it a workable thing.

SB: Yeah. Because I, I went and talked to the college and I said, "Oh you know, commercial fisherman..." And they said, "No, actually, you might be able to, *do* something."

JGF: Bring that perspec—And *understand* both perspectives.

SB: Because I agree there needs to be—There *need* to be regulations. Because, people get greedy. You know, I've *seen* it. And money is... You know, money is *king* sometimes, for people. But. You can't just make laws that don't work and say "Well we're doing *something*." You know? Because it's not working right. Like the whole—The fluke thing right now is the biggest thing. Because they changed even the *party* boat regulation. And these people rely on their customers coming, from New York, coming from—all over. And they're not going to come out to catch,

*one fish*. Or, you can't even—you know, seventeen inches. Not it's nineteen and a half inches. I mean, that's a big, big fish. You catch—All day long you catch eighteen inch fish. And you've got to throw them back.

And the thing is too... *I'm* very careful taking hooks out of the fish's mouth, when I'm on a party boat. [?] back. I don't know, if everybody is. You know? So you're throwing back a potentially dead fish anyhow.

So it's... Like I said, it just... I [sighs] start getting—I get, a little aggravated sometimes. I just, don't know what to do!

JGF: Yeah! Well it does seem like a tricky one to solve.

[Interruption/Paused/End of File WAV\_0036\_002]

[Start of File WAV\_0036\_003]

[00:00]

JGF: So I guess, my only other question right now that I would have, is what would you like the average festival visitor who comes to this, to understand about the fishing industry and also about women's role in it?

SB: I think—I've never been to this festival before. And we have a little blessing of the fleet but it's not like this. And this is very—I think it's great, actually, how they have all the—they have a scalloper down there and they got a dragger down there. People *go* on. They're giving tour of them. And... Just to see—Maybe videos, actually, of people out there fishing. Because, it's hard still, when you're explaining, "Well this goes down here and then this comes up and we dump this here..." And it's like—If you, they had a running kind of narrative, that might actually help. And the women in fishing—I just, I was down over here by the Coast Guard guys. I was telling them, about what we caught that one time. The IDs. And they were like, "Oh, you must be an observer." I'm like, "I'm not an observer. I'm a fisherman." They're like, "Really?" I'm like, "Yeah! I'm a fisherman!" You know? Like, that kind.... It kind of bothers me. Even sometimes I'm walking around here. *What* am I supposed to look like? To make you think I'm a fisherman? Do you know what I mean?

JGF: A man I guess [laughs].

SB: Exactly! *Sorry* I don't have a penis! You can *keep* your little penis club!

JGF: [laughs]

SB: I've *said this* to guys. I said, "If you're having a penis fight with me, you win!" You know what I mean? [laughs]

JGF: [laughs]

SB: It's not a competition here. Go ahead! You know, I don't want to be in your little party.

JGF: Do you mind if I quote you on that on various occasions? I love that! [laughs]

SB: [laughs] You win! Your penis *is bigger than mine*. You know what I mean? So I'm not really... *That* kind of aggravates me.

But... Even when I go home to New Jersey, and, you know I have a *truck*. You know I have—I swear a little too much. I tend to yell, because I'm always by..., with the engine running. So I go home my mom's like, "What are you yelling..." I'm like, "I am not yelling." You know?

So it just... Maybe it's just that there is, maybe some preconceived notion of dirty fishermen. And, you know what... I've said this on the boat. I don't care, what I look

like on the boat. I don't care how dirty I get. *I don't care if my clothes*—I don't care if there's *shit* all over my face! Because I clean up good. You know what I mean?

JGF: Yeah!

SB: So, there's got to be *both*. You know, I can—you can do *both*. So I'm not really sure, you know? Other than that I put my skins on, I put my hat on, I go to work. Because I'm a fisherman. You know? And I guess maybe if you saw me working you'd be like, "Oh, OK, she really is..." That's pretty much all it takes. But it's hard when I'm just walking around. You know? I have all my teeth.

JGF: That's right! Yeah!

SB: [laughs] You know?

JGF: [laughs] And you've got a tattoo but it's not particularly scary looking.

SB: This is... It's a temporary tattoo that's supporting Amanda? She's, making the skins with the fish on them.

JGF: Amanda Wright? The lobster woman?

SB: Yeah. So it's got a little fish on there. So we all put these on today. They're just temporary.

JGF: But why are you supporting her? What is it...?

SB: She's coming out with a line of skins with fish designs on them.

JGF: Oh, no sir! Oh I didn't realize that!

SB: Yeah. So that's a little fish on there.

JGF: Oh... OK. Guy Cotten. Is that her line?

SB: She's going through Guy Cotton. She's got a little booth over here. Did you interview her yet?

JGF: Amanda we—I interviewed her last year. She was wonderful.

SB: Yeah. She's great.

JGF: And she did her *Tom Cod* poem on tape for me.

SB: *Tom Cod*. I don't think I've heard that one yet.

JGF: Ask her about her *Tom Cod* poem. It's wonderful.

[03:22]

SB: I just met all of these women yesterday. And it's really cool. There's two girls that... The Vigessi sisters. And their father owns a party boat. And they've grown up working on this party boat. But there's no *commercial* fisherman. There's... I know there *have* been. But it's really to see other women out here. You know what I mean? Like I was saying, it doesn't matter that you *are* female but it's definitely nice to see a female face once in a while.

JGF: Exactly! Yeah. It's been neat to see it. It's been fun for me.

SB: Pretty much I've... You know, I've packed out now at Point Pleasant. I've packed out here. The other day at the shucking contest I walked up and, recognized one of the guys we used to pack out... We'd come in at two in the morning, you're packing out. You don't usually... A *girl* jumps off the boat and they're like, "What?!?" You know usually you get a couple weird looks. But I just stand there and I start working and then, "Oh, OK." So it's kind of cool, you know, you get... And then he told all of his friends. You know, "I know her, and she's a hard worker" kind of thing. So you get enough, word of mouth around that people are like, "Oh, OK." You know. "She's one of us."

JGF: That's cool.

I did—We have you as a quote unquote “fisherwoman.” And I heard you call yourself a fisherman.

SB: Yeah.

JGF: Is there any like, rule around that, with women in the industry?

SB: It’s—I’m a fisherman. *I* do everything.

JGF: Yeah. That’s just an occupational title?

SB: Yeah. And I’ve corrected my parents and stuff. What you... I believe “fisherwoman” at this point is still said like all... I don’t know. I don’t need some kind of, like... What’s the word I’m looking for. *Distinction* from everybody else. You know what I mean? *I’m* a fisherman. I *do* exactly what *you’re* doing. No *more*, no *less*. You know? And I—I can *stack* the *cartons*. I can *pick* the *fish*. I can *shuck* the *scallops*. So I *believe* I should be... You know what I mean? Just in the category of fisherman. I think a couple of the girls, they’re in the same, frame of mind. You know?

JGF: Yeah? Yeah.

Yeah like it seems especially where if, people heard that and thought it was sort of somehow, giving you some kind of special—

SB: Yeah.

JGF: —excuse kind of, status. You don’t want that.

SB: Yeah! And, I don’t want to be treated, differently on the boats. Like I’ve had guys, you know the first day I’m all with a new crew or a new guy. He’s being all *nice* and trying to—I’m like, “Cut the *shit* out! Let’s just go to work.” And then you’re like, “Ooookay.” You know? I don’t need you to be nice to me, kind of thing.

But. Like I said, it just takes, like a couple days. And then everybody’s like—it’s like you’re just with your friends. I mean I *love*—It’s like you’re fishing with your friends all the time. It’s kind of cool. You know?

JGF: That’s cool. Yeah. Huh.

Oh, and I just have to—You mentioned bleeding fluke. What exactly does that mean?

SB: Oh, we... The fluke we catch all the time we sell them for sushi. And, when you catch them you stick a little chisel through their—they have the vein that’s by the neck, I guess probably the jugular of the fish, I would guess. And then, at the tail you do the same. So you put a cut in both ends. And then you put them white side up, in a box with brine in it. So they actually bleed the blood out, and the fish meat is *really* clean. There’s like—So when you go for sushi, there’s no like, blood in it still. Yeah. Because their heart’s still pumping. Which is... Don’t say this in front of my *mom*, she’d be very upset [laughing].

JGF: [laughs]

SB: But. Whatever! You know? I don’t know, I just—there’s not a whole lot that bothers me besides spiders.

JGF: Oh...! [laughs]

SB: And there’s no spiders on boats.

JGF: I was going to say there’s probably no spiders on boats!

SB: Yeah! I do all right. That's one—I have one friend, “I cannot believe you are afraid of spiders. You can go lobstering. You can put that *shit* in *bait* bags.” I mean that stuff, just *reeks*. Lobstering has got to be, the smelliest, dirtiest job.

JGF: But it's not going to crawl up your leg!

SB: Yeah. It's not alive [laughs]. You know what I mean? I can deal with big, fish. But, don't hide a spider on me! [laughs]

JGF: That's so cool. Interesting.  
Well. I don't have any other questions. Except that like everybody I talk to I could probably talk to for hours. But. Is there anything I haven't asked that you would have liked us to know? Or that you would like to have on the tape? About your work, or....?

SB: Not that I can think of.

JGF: OK. OK well I need to get you to sign a release form.

SB: OK. Sure.

JGF: And I need to get your picture, so thank you very much!

SB: Oh, sure! Yeah, thank you!

[End of File WAV\_0036\_003/End of Interview]